

Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2008

Paul Branson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Attending: Janet Abelson, Joe Bischofberger, Eleanor Bloch, Myrtle Braxton, Richard Burnett, David Grant, Eugene Halliday, Rich Hedges, Marshall Loring, Joshua Miele, Bruce Oka, Dennis Trenten, Doug Weir, Shirlee Zane.

Members reported as unavailable: Ken Altenburger, Steve Belkin, Barbara Rhodes, Craig Yates.

Audience Member Self-introductions

Bob Planthold, member, MTC Advisory Council.

EDAC Minutes

For Dec. 6, 2007, minutes were put over until the next meeting because a page from the minutes was inadvertently omitted from the packet.

Advisory Council

Mr. Grant reported on the council's Dec. 12th meeting, their comments on Transportation 2035 draft vision policy, STA distribution policy options, and the TOD choice study.

EDAC Subcommittees

Emergency Preparedness Subcommittee Chair Trenten reported on their meeting. Public commenter Bob Planthold said for those wanting e-mails from the Emergency Preparedness Committee in San Francisco to contact staffer Joan Fraguli at 415-554-6789.

Pedestrian Safety Subcommittee Chair Grant reported on a presentation about a senior action committee developing safety agendas. Ms. Zane requested copies of city/county reports on pedestrian injuries and deaths. [Ursula Vogler, MTC staff, later provided pedestrian safety data from the State of the System report

from MTC's Web site.] Chair Grant noted counts made by senior advocates showing as many as 50 percent of drivers not stopping before making right-hand turns.

Senior Drive Issues/Alternatives Subcommittee Gene Halliday (who reported for Chair Lacayo) spoke generally about helping people face the fact they may have to give up their mobility freedom. He mentioned DMV materials previously distributed by Chair Lacayo.

Chair's Report

Chair Branson, citing today's two subcommittees that met prior to EDAC's regular meeting, encouraged subcommittee chairs to continue finding ways to meet, especially given the current and important topic of Transportation 2035.

Nomination of Officers

Nominated for chair last month were Paul Branson, David Grant and Marshall Loring. Ms. Vogler asked if there were any additional nominations [no] or declines [Mr. Grant and Mr. Loring]. Mr. Branson then gave a short speech that, if elected, his main goal remains to have EDAC audience chairs filled (due to the important work that EDAC does, compelling nature of the work, etc.); with a show of hands he was reelected chair.

Nominated for vice chair last month were Doug Weir and Craig Yates, Ms. Vogler asked if there were any additional nominations or declines [no]. Remaining nominee Mr. Yates was absent. Mr. Weir then gave a short speech, followed by a show of hands for each nominee; Mr. Weir was elected vice chair.

Ms. Vogler reminded subcommittee chairs to provide her agendas more than a week prior to meeting -- by the Tuesday before the packet is sent out (e.g., for February, subcommittee agendas are due Tuesday, Jan. 29th). Chair Branson reminded members of the ability to participate via conference call if necessary.

Staff Report

Ms. Vogler referred to her report in the packet.

511 Transit Trip Planner

Tom Spiekerman updated members on the replacement trip planner. New features: a wider screen, fewer navigations necessary, maps on all sites, multiple trips viewable simultaneously. He pointed out that some screen readers might be less readable than others.

Comments from members and public on trip planner:

- Any transfer introduces uncertainty, especially about sidewalks, curb ramps, etc. -- at least include on the trip planner a cautionary note about the possibility of no sidewalk between transfers.
- High use rates of the trip planner are partly due to the fact that a user needs to return to the page more than once due to receiving inaccurate data. Also, the results are often different each time. [Mr. Spiekerman commented that all trip planners have some troubles. Focus groups for the general public will be run in late January-early February.]
- Sometimes the trip planner recommends 3 buses (2 transfers) when 2 buses are needed (& only 1 transfer).
- Telephone service for the trip planner ought to reflect the Web version of the trip planner.

Rollout of the new Web site is anticipated for mid to late spring 2008. Mr. Spiekerman was interested in getting volunteers for a focus group on the new trip planner. He asked members to inform Ms. Vogler of their interest in participating.

Strategies for Effective Input on Transportation 2035

Ashley Nguyen, aware that members needed additional time to comment on her item at last month's meeting, announced the creation of joint advisor workshops to take place over the next four months. The intent of these workshops is to provide advisors from all three advisory committees a forum to vet ideas for potential projects and policies affecting Transportation 2035. In addition, the workshops would allow staff more time to review technical updates to the plan.

Ms. Nguyen outlined the recommended projects and strategies from the Coordinated Plan, which will be used as a springboard for T2035 projects related to seniors and persons with disabilities. Members expresses wariness about using the Coordinated Plan as a basis

because it may not sufficiently consider fixed-route service, among other projects; members advised more focus on the principal guiding thoughts and the chapter on senior transportation.

Therese McMillan spoke on the topic also, offering observations on the process and its “large scope that reaches toward everything MTC does.” She suggested members discuss specific projects, both within EDAC and during the larger joint meetings. She confirmed for Chair Branson that EDAC is allowed to develop specific projects for submittal directly to MTC, but that “congestion management agencies are the main conduit for projects.”

Ms. McMillan said the decision process would allow looking at CMA-submitted and MTC-submitted projects in tandem.

Ms. McMillan reminded everyone of the direction provided by the plan, even when getting knocked off the path: “it’s never a straight line, there’s always a curve with unknowns around the corner.”

When Ms. McMillan spoke of having a “family of investments,” Mr. Miele asked to “have the family include [seniors and the disabled] because there’s no current requirement that housing near transit be accessible.” Ms. McMillan also spoke about the broader view, tackling larger issues, and especially the possibilities that occur during implementation. As a final note, she pointed out that 80 percent of the region’s investment is in transit and that freeway efficiency is preferred over freeway expansion.

Additional member comments:

- Connect outcomes to demographic groups, for example, in X number of years we’ll have X percent more seniors, so the strategic plan ought make such connections.
- Consider the travelers who don’t drive as a balance to a plan that defaults to accommodating cars or freeway off ramps and their alternatives.
- Provide more express buses. People took the bus after World War II when fuel was sparse.
- Seniors will drive also; suggestions are needed on how to make it safer to do so.
- Keep a balanced approach and work within our communities where parents live with their adult children. Consider grant

offerings. Let MTC commissioners be heroes, give them suggestions.

- As it stands, paratransit costs are very high. Consider more cost effective alternatives.

In close, members were strongly encouraged to attend as many of the upcoming joint advisory committee workshops as possible. As well, Chair Branson reminded staff that a strategy session to flesh out project ideas was taking place in the Claremont Conference Room directly after the meeting.

State Transit Assistance Funds Update

Theresa Romell gave an update on STA distribution policy and sought a recommendation on two presented options. Ms. Romell reviewed the two options and also reviewed the analysis done on potential equity issues impacting both options. After a brief discussion, a show of hands unanimously recommended Option 2.

New Freedom Program Update

Christina Atienza presented a brief update on the New Freedom Program. The recommended projects are scheduled before the Commission at their meeting next month. Members offered their help vetting the 16 applications.

Other Business (none), Next Meeting (2/7/08), Adjournment (12:30PM)